

## CANADA IN THE POLISH PRESS

Canada does not normally receive a great deal of coverage in the Polish Press. From time to time short items or articles on specialized subjects are printed. The subjects selected generally fit into a definite pattern of comment on Canadian affairs. This pattern depends on internal and international developments. Priority is given to news items which show the difficulties besetting the Canadian economy or which illustrate the allegedly hostile intentions of western countries towards the countries of the Soviet Bloc.

There is no disposition to deny that Canada is a country of wealth and great natural resources. In a recent article in the *Glos Szczecinski* entitled "In Rich Canada and Our Country" a repatriate described the surprise which some of his friends express when they see that he has returned to Poland. "Are you crazy, they asked, to come back to Poland from Canada, from the rich country?"

Mr. Dabrowski, the returning emigrant, of course, eloquently explained in the remainder of the same article the reasons for his strange decision. He painted a harrowing picture of a vast number of workers in Canada driven to despair by unemployment and hunger. Terrible things happened to the families of such workers. He knew of one case where the mother of two small children jumped from a bridge because she had nothing for them to eat. In another case a mother and daughter had been driven to throw themselves under a train. Mr. Dabrowski himself had had to travel right across Canada in search of employment and had been fortunate to obtain work in a Quebec mine without having to follow the normal practice of giving a bribe of \$100 to \$150 for this favour. "I earned \$90 a month", he went on, "though I am a skilled worker. I paid \$25 for rent and often after paying my debts at the store I hardly had 50 cents for the whole month. That was the average standard of living".

This gloomy picture of working conditions in Canada reappears as a constant theme. There is no social insurance to offer protection against the financial setbacks of illness. Such things as collective labour agreements do not exist. "Canada does not now smell of either resin or dollars to the immigrants: it reeks of poverty" declares the *Zycie Warszawy*.

Before the last war many Polish families emigrated to Canada. Many have attempted to go there in the post-war years. The Polish government has now stopped this outward movement of its people. There is, it feels, no lack of work or opportunity at home and the Poland of today needs the contribution of every able-bodied individual. Much of the adverse comment on conditions in Canada, therefore, undoubtedly is intended to combat the frustration of the prospective emigrant who finds the avenue to a better life overseas blocked by official obstacles. Every opportunity of showing the fate of Polish emigrants in Canada in the worst light possible is eagerly seized. Incidents involving Polish D.P.'s are given wide publicity. The following comment from the Polish Press Agency on a recent happening is typical:

It is reported from Montreal that 200 Poles, tricked by the Canadian authorities into going to Canada from camps in Western Germany, have gone on a hunger strike. The Poles, who were forbidden to take their wives and children with them, were placed in a barrack near Montreal and were forced to work in conditions of slavery.

The reasons why a rich country like Canada offers such miserable prospects to its citizens and to immigrants are explained by the Polish Press under two headings: (a) the iniquities of the bourgeois-capitalist type of economy, and (b), as the preceding quotation from the *Trybuna Ludu* illustrates, Canada's unfortunate subservience to Washington.

Under the bourgeois system, of course, the workers have little or no political